

# THE BOYS OF 'SEVENTY-SIX



His grave historian  
sounds the praise  
from "Proctor" to  
"The East"  
Of those who rushed  
to arms long past their freedom's day:  
And I, a subject how much they land, those  
patriotic men,  
Who freed our land from old King George with  
the mighty sword and pen,  
But there's one oversight I'm sure, for what's  
the reason why  
Historians pass colonial boys almost in silence  
by?

The sterner page just gives one glimpse; but  
that is proof enough  
That revolutionary boys were made of proper  
stuff.  
And that was when the Boston lads marched up  
in virtuous rage,  
To tell the story of their wrongs to doughty  
Gen. Gage,  
And made that red-coat worthy afraid and  
shocked to see  
That boys, as well as brave men, were aching  
to be free.

I'm sure in those dark days of war that tried  
the big man's soul,  
There was a band of little men not named on  
fame's broad scroll,  
Who took the fighting farmer's place the wait-  
ing field to till,  
Or turned the valiant miller's coat and ran the  
sawdust mill.  
Or toiled to till the blazing forge from which  
the blacksmith died  
In haste to gain the field of strife where free-  
dom fought and bled.

When, from its rank, the farmer took his first-  
lock musket down,  
To rally out and meet in war the minions of  
the crown,  
When, with sad heart and husky voice and  
must and tear-stained eye,  
He called his wife and little ones to say the last  
good-by—  
No doubt he made his sturdy son to guard them  
from all harm,  
To plant and sow and reap the crop, and tend  
the little farm.

When clear was heard the cannon's boom as  
war's red tide rolled near,  
And mother's face and sister's cheek mayhap  
grew pale from fear,  
The son and brother made himself a garrison of  
one,  
And shouldered for the home's defense the rusty  
fighting gun;  
And to the timid women-hearts new lease of  
courage came—  
The patriot's son would prove his right to bear  
his father's name.



THE SON AND BROTHER MADE HIMSELF A GARRISON OF ONE.

In those dread hours when freedom's cause  
hung trembling to the scale,  
Perhaps the care of many homes was borne on  
shoulders frail,  
And though no history notes their deeds in  
rhetoric sublime,  
From youth and home faint hearts took cheer in  
all that gloomy time.  
And through her tears the soldier's wife some-  
times caught gleams of joy,  
And blessed kind fate for sparing her the brave  
and manly boy.

Those unnamed lads who bore their share of  
bitter toil and trial,  
Whose boyish days were sparse of sports that  
youthful hours beguile,  
And who stayed at home protecting the pre-  
cious "household gods,"  
Though no monumental marble will ever mark  
their souls,  
Were a band of little heroes, guarding well their  
homes and fires,  
While the cause of human freedom was defended  
by their sires.

The scholar walked a thorny path in revolu-  
tion's time,  
And boys found Education's height a rocky  
mount to climb.  
While he who then for Wisdom's smiles and  
Learning's favor sought,  
By kitchen hearth and fireside flame both  
teacher was and taught;  
For pedagogues were wielding the bayonet and  
the sword,  
And wrestling with the British troops and  
Hesse's hiring buche.

But not on battlefields alone nor in the halls of  
state  
Were all the patriots found who made "the day  
we celebrate";  
For often at the humblest post, far from the  
public gaze,  
Stood they who well deserved to wear the green  
heroic boys.  
Then let us think sometimes that we whom  
freedom now enjoys,  
Perchance may owe a mile of it to the colonial  
boy.

I don't begrudge to Washington, the soldier and  
the sage,  
And all the other patriots of that great and  
glorious age,  
The meed of praise they earned so well in  
camp and council hall,  
By standing up for freedom like a solid granite  
wall.  
But I hereby enter protest and my signature af-  
fix,  
To the treatment by historians of the Boys of  
Seventy-Six.

—P. C. Fossett, in Golden Days.

A funny story is told in a Portland  
book-store, though it is a question  
which party to the transaction the  
laugh is on. As the story goes, a young  
lady came in the other day and asked  
for a book entitled "Twice Blessed."  
The clerk, a very bright young man,  
hunted his catalogue in vain, and not  
finding what she wanted, wrapped up  
"The Quality of Mercy" for her. So far  
as they have heard, the customer did  
not know the difference.—Kennebec  
Journal.

## OUR NATAL DAY.

Our nation comes to celebrate  
With pomp its natal day,  
Its bursting from a thralldom state,  
To that of rural sway:  
"Tis meet that cannons loud should roar,  
That joyous bells should ring,  
That freedom glad on mount and shore,  
Triumphantly should sing.

Our land that stretches far and wide  
Was once an infant small,  
But now of battle the gem and pride,  
It rules among them all.  
"Twas purchased, freedom, by your sires,  
With blood 'twas dearly bought;  
O keep alive the sacred fires  
For which your fathers fought.

Our ships plow swift the mighty deep,  
Our yeomen plow the soil,  
Rich are the harvests that we reap  
As sure reward of toil:  
In every vein our land has health—  
The health of freedom's air,  
From seas and mines it gives us wealth—  
From prairies vast and fair.

And knowledge like a wondrous stream  
Flows through its breadth and length;  
Its mighty waters glowing, gleam,  
With commerce in its strength;  
O let the banners fly to-day,  
From spires and mountains high,  
It is our country's natal day,  
Ye sons of liberty!

And while ye gladly celebrate  
On freedom's happy soil,  
The birthday of your land so great,  
Return your thanks to God  
For all your vast extent and power,  
Your wealth on every hand,  
Your glories in the natal hour  
Of this your lovely land!

Were Heaven's blessings on the few  
Who for them prayed and fought;  
O freedom, keep the truth in view,  
Your land with blood was bought;  
Ye cannot be too glad to-day,  
Nor sing too joyfully,  
Let breezes on the banners play,  
Our land, our land is free!

—Anna D. Walker, in Christian at Work.

## "A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM."

A STORY FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY.



"I don't want to go to the Fourth of July," said the little boy, "with Mrs. Riley. Top floor, right hand side."

"Is it a quarter of ten, pre-cisely," said Mr. Jarrett, consulting the huge silver watch which had belonged to his father before him. "So you're the city child, are you?"

"I live on Avenue R," said the little boy, "with Mrs. Riley. Top floor, right hand side."

"Is it a quarter of ten, pre-cisely," said Mr. Jarrett, consulting the huge silver watch which had belonged to his father before him. "So you're the city child, are you?"

Mr. Jarrett worked industriously away at the large blue-green stretches of his onion bed, answered only by a snort, which might have been interpreted in any way that his interlocutor pleased.

"Most of the neighbors he've given me a small order," he resumed.

"Humph!" said Mr. Jarrett, unmoved.

"Specially where there's children."

"Humph!"

"You see, Neighbor Jarrett, it sort o' sets the day off from the rest of the year."

"Yes—exactly."

"And it don't cost so much arter all!" resumed Mr. Austey.

"Humph!"

"Better lemme put your name down for half a dozen pack—"

But here Hiram Jarrett straightened his portentous length up with a jerk.

"Ye may put my name down for nothin'!" said he. "Except for a man that's heartily sick and tired of this sort of thing, I dunno about your business, but mine is pressin', and I hain't no time to chaffer with you. And, if it's no offense, I'll bid ye good-mornin'!"

And Mr. Austey went off, muttering to himself words that would scarcely have edified Mr. Jarrett, could he have heard them.

"Them Jarretts ain't hardly human," said he, re-adjusting under his arm the little bundle of American flags, in different styles and sizes, which he had not ventured to unroll. "It does seem as if they didn't think o' nothin' but gettin' copper pennies together and countin' 'em, over and over agin'!"

When Hiram Jarrett had come in from the onion field, tired and warm and stiff with long stooping, he glanced with a dissatisfied eye at the table, where his wife had set out a bowl of raspberries and milk, a bilious-looking slab of cold salt pork, heaped around with beet greens, and half a loaf of rye bread.

"There ain't no sense in settin' table," said he. "I'd jest as soon eat my victuals off the pantry shelf!"

"It seems more sociable-like to sit down," said his wife, a pale, faded little woman with light-blue eyes and hair already beginning to turn gray, although she was not yet forty years old.

"It's all a waste o' time, gettin' ready and cleanin' up," said he, beginning to eat like a famished ocelot.

"Mrs. Brimmer was over here this mornin'," said Mrs. Jarrett, pouring herself out a cup of weak tea, sweetened with maple sugar and drunk without milk, because the creameries gave three cents a quart for all that the three "blanket cows" yielded.

"Eh?" said Hiram. "What for?"

"Well, she's goin' over to East Hill to spend Fourth o' July, and she can't take that little 'Fresh Air' child with her; her grandson's so ill and can't bear the least bit of noise. And she thought perhaps we'd be willin' to hev' him here, jest for a day."

"She's mistaken, then," said Hiram, with his mouth full of pork and greens. "I don't set no store by children, especially that sort o' child!"

Mrs. Jarrett looked wistfully at her husband, but made no remonstrance. She knew from long experience how

useless it was to set up her wishes against his will.

Hiram Jarrett was very tired that night when he went to bed, but his last words were a sneer and a cavil at the prevailing folly.

"Judge Dingley, indeed!" said he. "And a Fourth of July oration! I don't believe Judge Dingley's great-grandfather carried a musket at Bunker Hill as mine did."

"Then you be proud o' the day, after all?" said Mrs. Jarrett.

"I don't believe in makin' such an all-fired fuss over it," said Hiram, shortly.

The Fourth of July dawned, a red sun shining through a veil of mist. Hiram rose and proceeded to his work, as usual. Mrs. Jarrett went to a neighboring village, where she had a sister as hard-working and down-trodden as herself.

"Betsy is cleanin' house," said Mrs. Jarrett, by way of excuse to her husband, "and if I help her a day p'raps she'll come over in blackberry time and lend me a hand with the jam."

Mr. Jarrett had been across to the "fur pasture," to put the cows into new grazing grounds, and was returning by the short cut through the Widow Brimmer's apple-orchard, when the sound of a distant cannon struck upon his ear.

"They've begun with their toomfoolery already," said he to himself. "But it sounds sort o' pleasant, too. Wonder if it sounded that 'ere way to my great-grandfather at Bunker Hill? And there's a flag up on the top o' Deacon Saltonstall's store. I guess I've got as good right to fly a flag as he has, if—Hullo! Who be you, little man?"

A child, seven or eight years old, a fair-haired, blue-eyed little creature, was sitting on Mrs. Brimmer's doorstep, looking solemnly up at him.

"I'm Johnny Jones," said he.

"He's nobody at home. I was to stay here, right by the door, until she came back. My dinner was in a paper, but I was hungry, and I've eaten it up. Is it past dinner time, please?"

"It's a quarter of ten, pre-cisely," said Mr. Jarrett, consulting the huge silver watch which had belonged to his father before him. "So you're the city child, are you?"

"I live on Avenue R," said the little boy, "with Mrs. Riley. Top floor, right hand side."

"Is it a quarter of ten, pre-cisely," said Mr. Jarrett, consulting the huge silver watch which had belonged to his father before him. "So you're the city child, are you?"

"I pose your folks are sort o' lonesome without you," said the farmer, looking curiously at the little lad, as if he were some new variety of insect.

"I haven't any folks," said the child. "My father and mother are dead. I'm to go out in the rag-and-bottle wagon with Mr. Riley when I'm big enough."

"What's them sticks heaped up on the grass?" asked the farmer, swallowing down an unaccountable lump in his throat.

"Those are my firecrackers," said the



A GLORIOUS FOURTH.

little boy. "I'm playin' at fireworks. The long ones are my rockets, and the clam-shells are pinwheels. I should be quite happy if I wasn't so hungry."

Poor little, soft-voiced child! Poor little make-believe of dry sticks and stones! Mr. Jarrett gave himself a sudden jerk as if he fain would get free from some unseen demon, who was dragging him in the other direction.

"Come home with me, bub!" said he. "I live jest across the big meadow, you can see the chimbleys from here. I guess we can find some berry pie and new milk over there. And I say (fumbling uneasily in his pocket), let's go round by Austey's store and see what he's got left. I calculate you an' me can hev' a Fourth o' July by ourselves, as well as other folks!"

Little Johnny rose straightway up and clasped his small hand around Hiram Jarrett's horny forefinger. How it thrilled at the gentle touch! How many years was it since a child had confidingly taken his hand like that!

Mr. Austey could scarcely believe his eyes and ears, when old Farmer Jarrett came in with the little "Fresh Air" child jumping at his side and asked for six packs of firecrackers, four Roman candles and three pin-wheels!

"And I say," added the old man, somewhat sheepishly, "I guess ye may as well give me one o' them cheap flags while ye're about it! My great-grandfather fought at Bunker Hill, and Mrs. Jarrett's great-uncle, he was a sailor aboard the Constitution when she fit that battle with the Guerriere, his story, and if we hain't a right to naff the old flag over our front door I don't know who has."

So they went home through the wild rose-spangled woods and across the summer-scented meadows; little Johnny fitting on in advance with the flag streaming above his yellow head like a meteor, the proudest and happiest of

small creatures, while Mr. Jarrett followed with the parcel of fireworks.

Mrs. Jarrett was amazed beyond measure, when, on reaching home in the purple twilight, she discovered a pin-wheel revolving in showers of fiery sparks in front of the door, and saw, set on the table inside, the jar of plum jam that was only opened when the minister came, the tin box of ginger snaps, a pitcher of milk and one solitary section of the raspberry pie which had been baked for the morrow's dinner; while little Johnny's face, lighted by the blue coruscations, and Mr. Jarrett's beaming visage just behind were a study to behold.

"Oh!" cried the child, clapping his hands, "I do so love the Fourth of July! And I love Mr. Jarrett, too, and Mr. Jarrett's mother!" (Which was his way of accounting for the kind old lady with the streaky white hair).

"Waal, Eunice, I s'pose you think I'm crazy," said Mr. Jarrett, rather sheepishly. "I don't know as I blame ye, neither." And he explained to her how this singular paradox had brought itself to pass.

"I'm glad of it," said Mrs. Jarrett, heartily; "and I'll go to work and get you jest as nice a tea as I know how; a berry shortcake, and some flannel cakes, with maple sirup; jest as your old mother used to make 'em. Come here and kiss me, little boy. Bless us! how strong you smell of gunpowder!"

"It's the Fourth of July," said the child, joyously; "and there's three packs of firecrackers left."

At nine o'clock, they took the little boy back to Mrs. Brimmer's cottage.

"It's pretty solitary comin' back without him, eh, Eunice?" said Mr. Jarrett, as he held open the gate—an unwanted piece of courtesy—for his wife to pass through.

"Yes, it is," said Mrs. Jarrett.

"A child does sort o' brighten up a house, now, don't he?"

"Oh, yes!" Mrs. Jarrett fervently answered.

"I was kind o' thinkin', if you didn't object, Eunice, that we might adopt the little chap," blurted out Farmer Jarrett. "He hain't no relations belongin' to him, it seems, and he's a nice, docile boy."

"It does seem as if the Lord meant some one to take care of him, Hiram," answered the wife, almost afraid to let her husband see the thrill of joy that convulsed her features. She had been longing all these years for some one to love and cosset, this childless, mother-hearted woman.

"Waal, I'll see about it to-morrow mornin'," said Hiram, decidedly.

Mrs. Jarrett went to bed with a happy heart that night.

"I'm thankful to the Lord for sendin' us this Fourth o' July," she murmured

to herself. "And still more for puttin' that idee about little Johnny into Hiram's heart. There's lots o' true things in the Bible, but there ain't none truer than where it says: 'And a little child shall lead them!'—Amy Randolph, in N. Y. Ledger.

AS USUAL.

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